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Official Records

Disarmament Commission

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New York

Chairman: Mr. Erdenechuluun (Mongolia)

The meeting was called to order at 11.45 a.m.

Report of the Disarmament Commission to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session

The Chairman: In accordance with our programme of work, we are approaching the final stage of the current session, namely, agenda item 7, regarding the consideration and adoption of reports of the subsidiary bodies on the various agenda items and the draft report of the Commission. These reports are contained in documents A/CN.10/1995/CRP.2 to CRP.5.

In accordance with the agreed programme of work, we shall first consider and adopt the report of the Commission and thereafter hear the concluding statements by delegations.

I should like now to start the process of the consideration and adoption of reports of the subsidiary bodies on individual agenda items. In doing so, I shall call on the Chairman of each Working Group to introduce the report of that Group.

We begin with the report of Working Group I, on agenda item 4 entitled "Process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons", contained in document A/CN.10/1995/CRP.3. I call on the Chairman of Working Group I to introduce the report of that Group.

Mr. Valencia Rodríguez (Ecuador), Chairman of Working Group I (*interpretation from Spanish*): I have the honour to introduce the report of Working Group I, contained in document A/CN.10/1995/CPR.3.

This is a brief report covering only the procedural aspects of the session.

As noted in paragraph 8 of the report, the Group, despite its constant efforts, was unable to achieve a consensus document concerning agenda item 4, "Process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons".

At this point, allow me to express a strictly personal opinion.

I believe that this outcome has two positive elements that I should like to highlight. First, there is an express recognition of the realities of today's world, which are that peace and security form an integral part of advances in general and complete disarmament, of which, in turn, nuclear disarmament is an essential element. Indeed, the positions of all the delegations — all those to which consideration is due — reflect an undoubted interest in national peace and security.

Secondly, and as a result, all Member States share a common interest in avoiding nuclear war and in achieving nuclear disarmament, and must therefore in future increase their efforts — bilateral, regional and global — on the basis of negotiations conducted in a broad spirit of genuine cooperation and good faith so as to strengthen the existing mechanisms for nuclear disarmament and to agree on new procedures for achieving it. In this sense, it is now more important than ever for all States to assume their responsibilities for ensuring that international security is maintained at the lowest possible level of weapons and troop numbers.



I should like to take this opportunity to reiterate my gratitude to you, Sir, for the trust that you have placed in me. I should like also to express my gratitude to all the delegations for their hard work this session. I should particularly like to highlight the valuable cooperation we received from the representatives of Germany, Canada and France, who acted as Friends of the Chair in informal and private consultations.

I wish especially to thank Mr. Timur Alasaniya for his tireless assistance as Secretary of the Working Group, and would like also to express my gratitude to the interpreters and members of the secretariat who contributed to the work of the Working Group.

The Chairman: If there are no comments, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to adopt the report (A/CN.10/1995/CRP.3) of Working Group I on agenda item 4, regarding nuclear disarmament.

The report was adopted.

The Chairman: We shall now take up the report (A/CN.10/1995/CRP.4) of Working Group II on agenda item 5 entitled "International arms transfers, with particular reference to General Assembly resolution 46/36 H of 6 December 1991".

I call on the Chairman of Working Group II to introduce the report of the Working Group.

Mr. Hoffman (Germany), Chairman of Working Group II: At the outset, I should like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the guidance and support you gave the Working Group. I also thank all representatives who participated so actively in the work of the Group, and I thank also the secretariat, especially Mr. Lin, who helped us enormously.

Our work was based on the Chairman's paper of last year, which was prepared by my predecessor, the representative of Colombia. We decided on the structure of our work, on new headlining and on the scope of our endeavour: that is, all arms transfer matters, but clearly placing the emphasis on illicit arms trafficking.

We held an extensive first reading of the guidelines and, as members will see, there are many square brackets. However, as one representative put, they are mostly friendly square brackets. I think that these can now be removed, and that we have a good chance next year of

succeeding in achieving guidelines on arms transfers, and within the three-year time-frame.

The Chairman: If there are no comments, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to adopt the report (A/CN.10/1995/CRP.4) of Working Group II on agenda item 5 regarding international arms transfers.

The report was adopted.

The Chairman: We shall now take up the report (A/CN.10/1995/CRP.5) of Working Group III on agenda item 6, entitled "Review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade".

I call on the Chairman of Working Group III to introduce the report of the Working Group.

Mr. Gambari (Nigeria), Chairman of Working Group III: It is my pleasure and honour to introduce the report of Working Group III on agenda item 6.

Working Group III held nine meetings between 18 and 26 May 1995. Furthermore, I, as Chairman, conducted informal consultations with the Group and the Friends of the Chair during that period in order to promote agreement on the issue and facilitate the work of the Working Group.

At its first meeting, on 18 May 1995, the Working Group decided to devote two meetings to a short general exchange of views on the subject before it. The debate was very useful and constructive.

At its second meeting, on 19 May 1995, the Working Group agreed to take as the basis for its work its Chairman's working non-paper, which was prepared by consultation with the Friends of the Chair.

That text, along with several other working papers, were thereafter thoroughly discussed and numerous proposals and suggestions were made. As a result, the text was reformulated, several times, to a very considerable extent.

It is a matter of regret to have to report to the Commission that, despite our best efforts, on 26 May the Working Group did not reach a consensus on the text of the Chairman's working non-paper on the review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade.

I should like to state that the deliberations of the Working Group took place in a very positive atmosphere. The discussions were sometimes very spirited, but always courteous. However, in view of the divergence of views, it was not possible to find common ground on the issues that were raised in the course of the work of the Working Group. I feel sure, though, that inconclusive as our substantive work was, the basis for future consideration and further efforts on this agenda item has in fact been established, as members will see from the various versions of the Chairman's working non-paper, including perhaps the very last one.

I have already had the opportunity to express my thanks to all delegations without exception and in particular to the Friends of the Chair, and not forgetting the secretariat — especially Mr. Sattar and Ms. Webster — and all the others who collaborated with me, for the valuable cooperation and support that they have extended to me during the past two weeks.

I cannot conclude without expressing my thanks to the interpreters, who patiently provided their expert services throughout our deliberations, including some evening and some very late sessions indeed.

Allow me also to express my personal thanks and gratitude to you, Mr. Chairman, for your constant encouragement and for your valuable support.

At its ninth meeting, on 26 May 1995, Working Group III adopted its report by consensus. As members of the Commission are aware, however, the report was slightly amended earlier this morning. The amendments are, firstly, that there is a new paragraph, sandwiched between paragraph 9 and old paragraph 10. The new paragraph 10 will read as follows:

"At its ninth meeting, on 26 May, the Working Group, in accordance with the earlier decision of the Disarmament Commission, concluded the deliberation on the item entitled 'Review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade'."

Secondly, old paragraph 10 will thus become new paragraph 11, and will be slightly amended to read as follows:

"At the same meeting, the Working Group adopted, by consensus, its report to the Disarmament Commission on agenda item 6, entitled 'Review of the

Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade'."

I now have the honour to submit the report to the Disarmament Commission for its consideration, and I thank you once more, Mr. Chairman, for giving me the privilege of serving as Chairman of Working Group III.

The Chairman: May I take it that the Commission wishes to adopt the report (A/CN.10/1995/CRP.5) of Working Group III on agenda item 6, "Review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade", as orally amended?

The report, as orally amended, was adopted.

The Chairman: Since we have adopted all the reports of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission, I should like to thank the Chairmen of the Working Groups for their endeavours devoted to their subjects and for their cooperation in carrying out the tasks entrusted to them by the General Assembly.

We are now in a position to take up consideration of the draft report (A/CN.10/1995/CRP.2) of the Disarmament Commission. In this connection, I have the great pleasure of calling on the Rapporteur of the Commission to introduce the draft report.

Mr. Issa (Egypt), Rapporteur of the Disarmament Commission: It is my honour and pleasure to introduce before the Disarmament Commission the draft report of the Commission on its current session, which members have before them for consideration.

In conformity with previous practice, the draft report contains four parts: "Introduction", "Organization and work of the 1995 session", "Documentation" and "Conclusions and recommendations". As in previous years, the document presents a factual description of the Commission's work and proceedings during the session. With regard to the substantive work done by the Commission's subsidiary bodies, the relevant section will contain the reports of the three Working Groups which have just been adopted by the Commission.

As members may note, at this stage certain spaces for information have been left blank in the draft report. I propose that we leave it to the secretariat to complete the text with meeting numbers and dates as appropriate.

I should like to draw members' attention to the following changes in Commission's draft report.

In part I, paragraph 3 will read as follows:

"At its organizational session, the Commission also decided that the items entitled 'Process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons' and 'Review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade' would be concluded at its 1995 substantive session."

The second change is in part III B of the draft report, which will now contain two new paragraphs, adopted this morning at the meeting of the Committee of the Whole. After existing paragraph 18, new paragraph 19 will read as follows:

"A note verbale dated 26 May 1995 was submitted by the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the Centre for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat, containing a statement (A/CN.10/190)."

New paragraph 20, immediately thereafter will read as follows:

"A working paper entitled 'Review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade' was submitted by India (A/CN.10/191)."

In the final version of the report, old paragraph 19 and subsequent paragraphs will be renumbered accordingly.

At the current session, Working Group II has laid a good foundation for agenda item 5, on international arms transfers. It is hoped that that subject will be concluded with a positive result next year. However, the Disarmament Commission was unable to reach a positive conclusion on the two other items on its agenda, the review of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade and the process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security.

Finally, I wish to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks to the members of the secretariat for the assistance and cooperation they extended to me in the preparation of the Commission's draft report. In particular, I should like to express my sincere gratitude to Mr. Prvoslav Davinić, Director of the Centre for Disarmament Affairs. In addition, I wish to offer sincere

thanks to Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung, Secretary of the Disarmament Commission, and his colleagues for their valuable assistance and cooperation.

Moreover, I should like to emphasize that it was a great honour and privilege for me to have served under your distinguished and effective leadership, Sir, and to have received the fullest cooperation of the Chairmen of the three Working Groups, who so ably guided the deliberations of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission during this session.

With this brief introduction, I now recommend that the Commission adopt the draft report contained in document A/CN.10/1995/CRP.2, as orally amended.

The Chairman: We shall now consider the draft report (A/CN.10/1995/CRP.2) of the Commission paragraph by paragraph.

Since there were no comments on paragraphs 1 to 8, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to adopt those paragraphs.

Paragraphs 1 to 8 were adopted.

The Chairman: The blanks in paragraphs 9 to 11 will be filled in by the secretariat at a later date. Since there were no comments on paragraphs 9 to 11, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to adopt those paragraphs.

Paragraphs 9 to 11 were adopted.

The Chairman: Since there were no comments on paragraphs 12 to 18, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to adopt those paragraphs.

Paragraphs 12 to 18 were adopted.

The Chairman: Since there are no comments on renumbered paragraphs 19 to 26, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to adopt those paragraphs.

Paragraphs 19 to 26 were adopted.

The Chairman: Having adopted all paragraphs of the report, the Commission will now take up the draft report as a whole, with all three reports of the subsidiary bodies inserted therein. May I take it that it is the wish of the Commission to adopt the draft report of the Commission as a whole, as orally amended?

The draft report, as orally amended, was adopted.

The Chairman: The Commission has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 7.

Concluding statements

Ms. Hamilton (Australia): I should like to start by expressing the heartfelt appreciation of my delegation, Sir, for your guidance during this session. I should also like to thank the secretariat and the interpreters for their diligence.

Australia is disappointed that Working Group I on nuclear disarmament, despite the commendable efforts of the Chairman and the Friends of the Chair, was unable to produce an agreed document. Consensus was considered by the great majority of delegations to be both a desirable and a feasible outcome. It is therefore regrettable that not all delegations appeared willing to engage in serious negotiations to find even small areas of common ground.

The absence of a result from the Commission's deliberations on nuclear disarmament does not accurately reflect — nor does it detract from — the realities that were considered in Working Group I. Nuclear disarmament of historic proportions is under way and, with the recent indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the nuclear-weapon States, as well as the other 174 States Parties to the Treaty, are committed to continuing systematic disarmament towards the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. My delegation continues to believe that the key to the attainment of this goal remains the universality of the non-proliferation regime.

Working Group II made considerable progress on international arms transfers, focusing in particular on the serious problem of illicit transfers, under the spirited and effective leadership of Ambassador Hoffmann. In his supplement to "An Agenda for Peace" (A/50/60), the Secretary-General drew attention to the need for what he called "micro-disarmament" (*ibid.*, para. 60) — action on the carnage caused by small weapons, many illicitly obtained, in the real conflicts that the United Nations increasingly confronts. In the Security Council debate on the supplement, Ambassador Butler of Australia strongly supported United Nations action in this area. The Commission's efforts are highly relevant.

The draft guidelines produced by Working Group II provide a firm basis for the conclusion of this item next year. Capitals will need to give attention to the technical implications of the draft guidelines and to problems of

terminology. We advocate rationalizing the introductory and general sections of the guidelines with a view to avoiding duplication, and to ensure that the important recommendations for national and international action clearly stand out.

We would like to take this opportunity to commend Ambassador Gambari for his honourable efforts to produce an agreed mid-term review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade in Working Group III. Despite the lack of a final agreed document, we found the attempt a useful exercise. Our deliberations under Ambassador Gambari's impressive chairmanship clearly showed that positive achievements have been made towards the objectives set out in the founding declaration (resolution 45/62 A, annex). Our efforts also produced some constructive suggestions for further action.

This year's session of the Disarmament Commission points to the need for realism in our expectations for the Commission in future. The Disarmament Commission should no longer allow itself to be exploited as a forum for futile attacks on the near-universal Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Concerns about the NPT should be addressed within the strengthened review process of that Treaty itself: the Disarmament Commission should address itself to serious dialogue on important, emerging disarmament issues where common ground between the States Members of the United Nations *per se* can and should be identified. The value of this forum lies in all delegations being committed to such a purpose.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to place firmly on record the Australian Government's strong condemnation of the nuclear test conducted by China on 15 May. Australia is deeply disappointed that China proceeded to test only a few days after the conclusion of the NPT Review and Extension Conference. That historic Conference adopted a decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament which committed States to exercising the utmost restraint with respect to nuclear testing. We believe that China's action is inconsistent with these undertakings. We call on all nuclear-weapon States to refrain from any further testing — as would be consistent with the unequivocal international opposition to nuclear testing — pending the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty no later than 1996.

Mr. Walters (South Africa): Mr. Chairman, I should like to express my delegation's appreciation for the dedicated and impartial manner in which you have presided over the 1995 substantive session of the Disarmament

Commission. We would also like to pay tribute to the Chairmen of the Working Groups, who faced a difficult and at times impossible task in attempting to guide delegations to a consensus. That this consensus remained so elusive in Working Groups I and III — the substantive work of which we had hoped to complete this year — is certainly not the fault of the highly competent and experienced diplomats who presided over them.

The South African delegation is disappointed that, despite the allocation of scarce resources to it, so little of substance has been achieved by the Disarmament Commission at this year's session. We would have hoped that some progress, modest though it might have been, could have been obtained on items 4 and 6 of our agenda. We understand that deep divisions of principle exist in the international community on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Nevertheless, persistent lack of progress on items on its agenda could undermine the credibility of this important body. We therefore believe that a more modest and focused agenda would be appropriate for future sessions of the Disarmament Commission. In this way, we hope that future substantive sessions may produce more meaningful results.

My delegation has noted the regret expressed by several countries during the first meeting of Working Group I over the Chinese nuclear test conducted on 15 May 1995. The decision by China to conduct such a test only three days after the conclusion of the NPT Review and Extension Conference, at which the nuclear Powers had expressly undertaken to exercise the utmost restraint in testing, is very unfortunate. We trust that the latest Chinese tests will not delay the negotiations for a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty currently taking place in Geneva. The South African Government urges the People's Republic of China to join the other nuclear-weapon States in declaring a moratorium on future testing pending the entry into force of a comprehensive nuclear-test ban treaty, and to work towards the completion of that treaty before the end of 1996.

Mr. Miraillet (France) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation, as it did at the beginning of our session, wishes to make a statement on behalf of the European Union, the States of Central and Eastern Europe associated with it — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia — and Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

When this session opened, the 24 countries for whom I am speaking now assured you, Sir, of their full support

in dealing with the heavy workload assigned to us at this session. The European Union did not underestimate the difficulties that lay ahead in the wake of the Review and Extension Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The patchy outcome that we see from our work today unfortunately highlights the fact that our misgivings were not without justification.

This year, two main Working Groups worked in parallel, with the agreement of delegations. The consultations that we held included many informal meetings to try to harmonize positions — thus, our discussions over the past two weeks have been intensive. Even so, the work of this session — at least, the work in two Working Groups — very rarely went any further than simple restatements of national positions.

With regard to the work of Working Group I on nuclear disarmament, the European Union cannot but regret that, after five years of debate, no agreement has been forthcoming. The discussions within the NPT Review and Extension Conference of course made us aware of how great our differences were, but they still enabled us to find consensus language on some fundamental issues, and we regret today that some delegations would not accept it as a working basis, even at the risk of causing an impasse in our consultations.

The European Union can say the very same of the work of the Working Group that reviewed the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade. We had hoped, when the work started, that a document acceptable to all delegations could be drafted on this item. The introductory working document submitted by the delegation of Nigeria was a promising basis for this, but the repeated attempts by certain delegations to introduce amendments that previous weeks had shown clearly would not command general assent, prevented our reaching the agreement we all know was within our reach.

Given this situation, the undeniable progress that we made in our discussions on international arms transfers is encouraging and should enable us next year to adopt, by consensus, a final document in this sensitive area. The success of this work should perhaps prompt us to think about the future need for the Disarmament Commission to focus on specific, constructive subjects.

The European Union wishes to thank you, Sir, for the exemplary way in which you guided the work of the Commission. We also thank the Chairmen of the Working

Groups, who spared no effort, despite the difficulties, in order to arrive at the necessary middle way of compromise. We thank also the secretariat for its tireless efforts over the past two weeks.

Mr. Felicio (Brazil): The 1995 session of the Disarmament Commission has in many respects been a disappointing experience. In spite of your own efforts, Mr. Chairman, and those of the Chairman of Working Group I — Ambassador Valencia Rodríguez — and the Chairman of Working Group III — Ambassador Gambari — it was not possible to reach consensus on any substantive document on the items relating to nuclear disarmament and to the review of the Third Disarmament Decade.

Working Group II — chaired by Ambassador Hoffmann — made some progress, but we are still far from agreeing on the question of international arms transfers.

Brazil has always tried to make a constructive contribution to multilateral efforts in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation, and I can affirm that this attitude will remain unchanged. We are, however, concerned by the present climate, which we fear might have a negative impact on the work of the Conference on Disarmament, the First Committee and other multilateral forums.

Before the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), there was a legitimate expectation that a decision on the future of that Treaty would help pave the way for new achievements. Events in the last few weeks have shown us that this may not be so.

New efforts are needed to preserve the credibility of the multilateral disarmament machinery. As regards the Disarmament Commission, we must identify possible areas for agreement for the next session, or otherwise reflect on what we want from the Commission in the future. Moreover, we should demonstrate with deeds our commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation. The negotiations on a "cut-off" treaty must be given a good start. A comprehensive test-ban treaty without exceptions or loopholes must be completed promptly. The nuclear-weapon States that suspended nuclear tests before the NPT Conference should not resume testing for any reason: no new nuclear tests should occur.

Brazil hopes that all countries will cooperate earnestly to strengthen international security through a renewed commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. Moradi (Islamic Republic of Iran): I wish at the outset, Sir, to extend to you, to the Chairmen of the three Working Groups and to the secretariat my delegation's deep appreciation for all you have done to facilitate progress in the work of the Disarmament Commission this year.

My delegation expresses its disappointment that members of the Commission were not able to come up with consensus documents on two items, the process of nuclear disarmament and the review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade. Consensus eluded us because certain nuclear-weapon States, with the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) recently put in place, were more reluctant than before to agree to a realistic and balanced assessment of progress and failures — in particular in the field of nuclear disarmament — and on the basis of such an assessment to commit themselves to some modest measures in this field.

As my delegation, like a number of other delegations, has consistently maintained, lack of progress on items on the Commission's agenda should not in any way call into question the relevance and credibility of this important body. The Commission serves an important purpose: the identification of areas of agreement and disagreement on disarmament issues, and the formulation of guidelines, principles and recommendations on those issues. We are fully convinced that, if we are to expect progress in the Commission, we should change its attitude towards the issues it discusses. We hope that, from now on, efforts will be made under your guidance, Sir, to formulate meaningful items for next year's agenda of the Disarmament Commission.

Ms. Yoo (Republic of Korea): At the outset, Mr. Chairman, I would like to join previous speakers in expressing deep gratitude for your efforts in guiding the Disarmament Commission this session. My delegation wishes to extend its appreciation, through you, to the Chairmen of the three Working Groups, who provided excellent leadership in the consideration of their respective agenda items.

With respect to agenda item 4, on the process of nuclear disarmament, I believe we had a very useful and quite comprehensive exchange of views. Despite the honest efforts of each delegation, however, we had very

regrettably to close our discussion of this important subject without producing any concrete result from the work that had been done.

This seems to be a replay of last year's disappointment, when we had to drop the item on the role of science and technology from our agenda after four years of substantive work.

Maybe we had been too ambitious from the start. While we all agree that nuclear disarmament is one of the highest-priority matters for the international community, we also know that at the present stage there exist some unbridgeable differences between the views of certain delegations on this issue. Thus, it might have been better if we had somewhat narrowed down the subject matter, focusing on certain aspects of nuclear disarmament.

Drawing from this experience, my delegation would like to suggest that, for its future work, the Disarmament Commission should choose a more manageable and practical subject for its agenda, so as to produce a meaningful result.

My delegation also finds it regrettable that Working Group III could not reach agreement on agenda item 6, review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade. This was attributable mainly to differences of perception on the part of some countries regarding what had or had not been achieved over the past five years. It is unfortunate that we chose to focus on the differences rather than trying to utilize this opportunity to formulate new imperatives and strategies for attaining common disarmament goals for this decade.

Thanks to the able leadership of Ambassador Hoffmann of Germany, however, Working Group II was able to make some tentative progress on the important issue of international arms transfers. The illicit transfer of arms is clearly destabilizing for many countries and poses a threat to regional and international peace and security. My delegation hopes that this year's discussion will provide a useful basis for the Disarmament Commission to make rapid progress in this important field at next year's session.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to echo other speakers' sentiments regarding the Chinese nuclear test of 15 May, and it urges that China should join the other nuclear-weapon States' moratorium on nuclear testing so as not to delay the conclusion of negotiations on the comprehensive test-ban treaty, anticipated no later than 1996.

Mr. Macedo (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation regrets that once again the Disarmament Commission has concluded its session with very few tangible results. We deplore in particular the fact that it was unable to reach any agreement on nuclear disarmament, an item that has been on its agenda for several years now and that the Commission has just decided not to re-examine.

Mexico is deeply concerned at this complete lack of results on a question that is of the highest priority to us. In this so-called new era in which bipolar confrontation no longer exists, it is especially regrettable that the international community should be unable to arrive at a firm commitment on nuclear disarmament and on the complete elimination of these weapons of mass destruction, which continue to endanger the very survival of the human race.

We would like to put on record here our gratitude for the untiring efforts of the Chairman of Working Group I, Ambassador Valencia Rodríguez of Ecuador, and of his assistants in attempting to produce a document that would be acceptable to all. Unfortunately, his patience and determination met with a wall of intransigence. We would have thought that the results of the latest Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which had just concluded here in New York, would have created a more auspicious climate for promoting understanding. We were wrong. Once again, in the Working Group, we came face to face with positions that we thought had been left behind us.

The complete elimination of nuclear weapons continues to be a matter of the highest priority for Mexico's foreign policy. We believe that only complete elimination can guarantee that there is no risk of a nuclear war, which would threaten all countries equally.

The reductions in nuclear arsenals that have been negotiated in the last few years are therefore cause for satisfaction as far as my Government is concerned. However, the job is very far from done. We once again call on the five nuclear-weapon States to redouble their efforts towards the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

I should like to take this opportunity to repeat my Government's call for the nuclear Powers to refrain from nuclear testing pending the entry into force of the treaty

banning them, for which the negotiations are to be concluded by year's end 1996.

Finally, my delegation would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and all the members of the Bureau for their efforts during this session of the Disarmament Commission.

Mr. Chandra (India): At the outset, I should like to echo the sentiments of previous speakers as to the distinguished and wise manner in which you, Mr. Chairman, have conducted the proceedings of the Disarmament Commission this session. I also wish to congratulate the Chairmen of the three Working Groups.

We too are deeply disappointed that this year the Disarmament Commission has not been able to come up with substantive, consensus papers on the work of Working Groups I and III. In our view, their inability to make progress was essentially attributable to three factors.

The first factor is a tendency to overestimate the progress actually made so far in the area of nuclear disarmament: in our view, there has been progress, but it has been modest.

The second factor is the efforts calling for the universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We do not subscribe to that Treaty, which is discriminatory and does not offer a sure and practical route to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons in a time-bound frame.

The third factor is the effort to make only minimal recommendations for future progress in nuclear disarmament. It has always been our view that in this we should be coming out with recommendations that should be meaningful and lead to the complete and early elimination of nuclear weapons.

Having said that, while there was a lack of progress in developing papers for Working Groups I and III it has to be admitted that a better understanding has evolved of each other's positions and that the lack of a consensus paper merely reflects fundamental differences in views on nuclear disarmament. These are indeed divisive, and were responsible for the lack of progress I just mentioned.

We welcome in particular the work accomplished by Working Group II under the distinguished leadership of Ambassador Hoffmann. We feel that tangible progress has been achieved in that area: this we welcome, and we are

confident that the Working Group will be able to produce a paper on its subject next year.

Finally, I should like to state that the absence of papers from Working Groups I and III should not detract from, or make us despondent about, the role of the Disarmament Commission.

We feel that the Disarmament Commission should continue its role as the premier body for deliberations on disarmament matters. There is not and cannot be a substitute for it. I think also that we should not and, indeed, cannot expect it to come up with papers on each and every item under deliberation. This will happen when there is consensus and, in the meanwhile, the continuance of the exercise of deliberation itself has a value which should not be underestimated.

Mr. Shcherbak (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Russian delegation would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the efforts you have made towards ensuring the effective discharge of our work. We should also like to thank the Chairmen of the three Working Groups who have done much to help us achieve tangible results.

Unfortunately — and our delegation would like to add its voice to those of other delegations who have already spoken -- we feel disappointed and dissatisfied that we did not manage to make progress and come out with tangible results on two items on the agenda for this session. I refer to the general guidelines for nuclear disarmament and to the review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade.

Of course, our work here cannot be viewed in isolation from the Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) that has just concluded. My delegation would like to stress in particular that the Conference laid some positive groundwork for us here too, in the Disarmament Commission, that we can use to achieve tangible results, particularly on the agenda item on nuclear disarmament.

We believe that we did not manage to take advantage of all the opportunities, but this should not in any way detract from the historic importance of the NPT and of the results that were in fact achieved at the Conference, that is, the indefinite extension of the Treaty and the adoption of important documents that make it possible to promote, further, full-scale implementation of the Treaty in the

future, and also to enhance the effectiveness of the mechanisms for reviewing its operation. Nor can we undertake the enormous progress made by the nuclear Powers, and, in particular, by my country, in the field of nuclear disarmament. For us, progress in the area of nuclear disarmament, in fact nuclear disarmament itself is not just so much hot air: we are talking here about billions of dollars spent to put nuclear disarmament into practical reality, and we never agreed that no progress has been made on it.

Furthermore, I wish to stress that it is precisely the results of the review part of the 1995 NPT Conference that are stimulating further progress toward disarmament — specifically, the high-priority issues now include the quickest possible conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, and many delegations, including those of the nuclear Powers, are hurrying off to Geneva to speed up work on it. Therefore, we would like once again to stress that movement here has not stopped, and as was always the case, is instead continuing.

Turning now to the Disarmament Commission, my delegation agrees that we need to have a realistic agenda and we need to give serious thought to that matter, but we are none the less convinced that we have a positive basis for success in our work. Indeed, many of the formulations that were agreed to at the NPT Review Conference could be used in the documents that we have been trying to develop at this session.

We also believe that here we need to be clear that agreement and tangible results can be achieved only through compromise, by rejecting any artificial schemes, academic approaches and so on. We believe that common sense will prevail and that next year or in the very near future we will be able to achieve more tangible results in the Disarmament Commission.

Mr. Sha Zukang (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): This session of the Disarmament Commission is about to come to an end after two weeks of work. We appreciate the talent and the wisdom that you, Mr. Chairman, have demonstrated in guiding our deliberations and the efforts you have made to achieve progress. We are also grateful to the Chairmen of the three Working Groups, the Secretary of the Disarmament Commission, Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung, the members of the secretariat and the interpreters for the large amount of work they have put in.

At this session, the Disarmament Commission failed to reach consensus conclusions on two items, namely, nuclear disarmament and the review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade. That is to be regretted. However, the Chinese delegation holds that the various countries have had serious and meaningful discussions of the issues before the Commission.

Because of changes on the international scene that are conducive to international peace and security, there has been progress in the field of nuclear disarmament in the first half of the decade of the 1990s. However, the goals set out in the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade have yet to be achieved. Countries should continue their efforts in this regard. As the Declaration points out, countries that have the biggest arsenals have a particular responsibility in terms of attaining various disarmament goals, including that of nuclear disarmament.

The prevention of an arms race in outer space continues to be a question of major interest for the international community and, in this connection, certain developments in recent years are matters for concern. We believe that, given the great changes in the international situation, present circumstances are very promising both for the prevention of an arms race in outer space and for the peaceful utilization of outer space. The international community should continue its efforts to see to it that outer space will be used solely for peaceful purposes.

The provision of security assurances for the non-nuclear-weapon States continues to be a question of major concern to many non-nuclear-weapon States. In this regard, Security Council resolution 984 (1995) is a positive step. However, the deliberations at this session of the Disarmament Commission have shown that our efforts fall far short of the requirements and demands of the vast majority of non-nuclear-weapon States. The international community, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, should continue to strive for the conclusion, as early as possible, of an internationally binding instrument on non-first use of nuclear weapons and on non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon countries and in nuclear-weapon-free zones.

Nuclear testing is, understandably, a question of great concern to the non-nuclear-weapon States. China has consistently held that a ban on nuclear testing — like non-first use, non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States, and nuclear non-proliferation — is a step towards a comprehensive ban on using nuclear weapons and

towards their total elimination. In this regard, we are pleased to note that negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty have already begun and that substantial headway is being made. We hope that the negotiations will proceed smoothly and will lead to the conclusion of a treaty no later than year's end 1996.

China has consistently exercised the utmost restraint in nuclear testing, and our attitude has not changed under the influence of any particular event or circumstance. Although China has on several occasions imposed a temporary moratorium on its nuclear testing, our position and views on the question have never led us to declare a moratorium *per se*.

Compared with the nuclear testing of the countries possessing the largest and most advanced nuclear arsenals — which have conducted more than 1,000 nuclear tests — China's testing has been very limited. China has taken an active and serious part in the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty and has repeatedly made the commitment not to engage in any nuclear testing after the entry into force of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. As always, China will work with the other members of the Conference on Disarmament in a consistent effort to conclude a treaty on this issue as early as possible.

The Working Group on the agenda item on international arms transfers, under the leadership of Ambassador Hoffmann of Germany, has conducted very serious discussions on the problems for peace and stability in certain countries and regions caused by the unregulated transfers of conventional weapons in general and illicit arms transfers in particular. We believe that it is imperative to establish guidelines in this field that are acceptable to all countries. We hope that, on the basis of the work done this year, we will be able to engage in serious deliberations in order to achieve guidelines on international arms transfers — and in particular illicit transfers — at the next session of the Disarmament Commission.

Other business

The Chairman: No delegation wishes to make a statement under this agenda item. May I take it, therefore, that the Commission has concluded its consideration of this item?

It was so decided.

Statement by the Chairman

The Chairman: As the United Nations Disarmament Commission is about to conclude its substantive work for the year 1995, I shall say a few concluding words as its Chairman. I will confine my remarks to some aspects of our work at this session without making an attempt to speculate about prospects for the future, as this might turn out to be an over-ambitious task.

I wish to thank all the delegations that have made statements on the results of the work of the Disarmament Commission at this year's substantive session. They reflect the situation obtaining in the field of limiting the arms race, especially the nuclear arms race. We have also heard interesting ideas as to how the Disarmament Commission might proceed in the future. I hope that delegations will reflect on them during the inter-sessional period.

This session of the Disarmament Commission has been held in circumstances that can be characterized only as exceptional and unique. The Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which preceded the substantive session of the Disarmament Commission, seems to have had a mesmerizing and overpowering effect on our work. In spite of all the painstaking and determined efforts by the Chairmen of Working Groups I and III — Ambassador Valencia Rodríguez of Ecuador and Ambassador Gambari of Nigeria, to whom we are deeply grateful — success, to our regret, has eluded our grasp, and our failure is representative of the deep-rooted and fundamental differences that continue to exist on issues relating to nuclear disarmament.

None the less, I am tempted to add that expectations may have been somewhat high, especially in view of the results of the NPT Conference. I would have thought that, given the overall success of that Conference, some major players could have displayed a greater sense of understanding and flexibility. In the same vein, I wish to say that it would also seem unwise to be unduly negativistic. In other words, I would have expected more flexibility and more understanding from all sides.

Failure to reach agreement in two Working Groups should not defeat our will to persevere in our common endeavours. Similarly, this cannot and should not become a convenient pretext for calling the Disarmament Commission itself into question.

In this respect, it is highly significant that Working Group II, dealing with the issue of international arms transfers, has made specific progress and laid a sound basis for the successful conclusion of its work next year — especially the progress represented by the agreement on the scope and structure of the document. Our appreciation goes to Ambassador Wolfgang Hoffmann of Germany for his energetic and effective leadership.

As we have concluded the consideration of two items this year, it may be advisable to think about the possible new items that could form the agenda of the next substantive session. I hope that the informal consultations undertaken in this regard may prove useful in terms of developing ideas into something specific that will command the support of all delegations.

Together with the other members of the Bureau, I look forward to continuing our consultations with delegations on this issue later this year, during both the fiftieth session of the General Assembly and the organizational session of the Commission. I am also looking forward to working with members on the draft resolution or resolutions on the work of the Disarmament Commission this year to be submitted to the General Assembly at its next session.

Before we conclude, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to all the Vice-Chairmen and to the Rapporteur of

the Commission, Mr. Alaa Issa of Egypt, for their close cooperation and support. I am sure that all members of the Commission join me in thanking most sincerely the Centre for Disarmament Affairs, under the direction of Prvoslav Davinić, for its competent and highly professional support. We are particularly grateful to Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung, Secretary of the Disarmament Commission, as well as Mr. Timur Alasaniya, Mr. Mohammed Sattar, Ms. Carolyn Cooper and Ms. Lucy Webster, who served as Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries of the Working Groups. Their advice and assistance have, as always, been indispensable.

Many thanks go to the interpreters, the Conference and Documents Officers, and to all other members of the United Nations Secretariat who contributed to facilitating the work of the Commission.

Finally, I wish to express, on behalf of all members of the extended Bureau and in my own name, sincere thanks to all the delegations for the kind sentiments and encouragement offered to us.

Closure of the session

The Chairman: I declare the 1995 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission closed.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.